

REMARKS

Applicants appreciate the Examiner's thorough consideration provided the present application. Claims 1-3, 5-14 and 16-21 are now present in the application. Claim 1 has been amended. Claims 19-21 have been added. Claim 4 has been cancelled. Claims 1 and 19-21 are independent. Reconsideration of this application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

Election/Restriction Requirement

Applicants in the previous Reply filed June 13, 2005 provisionally elected claims 1, 2, 4-14 and 16-18 with traverse. However, the Examiner did not respond the grounds for traversing the restriction requirement, and has examined non-elected claim 3 on the merits in the instant Office Action. Since any requirements in the previous Office Action that are not repeated in the next Office Action have been withdrawn, Applicants respectfully submit that the previous restriction requirement has been withdrawn.

Allowable Subject Matter

The Examiner has indicated that dependent claims 6, 7 and 10 would be allowable if rewritten to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicants greatly appreciate the indication of allowable subject matter by the Examiner.

By the present amendment, independent claims 19-21 have been added to include the subject matter of dependent claims 6, 7 and 10, respectively, as discussed hereinbelow.

Priority Under 35 U.S.C. §119

Applicants thank the Examiner for acknowledging Applicants' claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. §119, and receipt of the certified priority document.

Information Disclosure Citation

Applicants thank the Examiner for considering the references supplied with the Information Disclosure Statement filed on March 15, 2004, November 22, 2004 and April 29, 2005, and for providing Applicants with an initialed copy of the PTO-1449 form filed therewith.

Drawings

The Examiner did not indicate whether or not the formal drawings have been accepted. Since no objection has been received, Applicants assume that the drawings are acceptable and that no further action is necessary. Confirmation thereof in the next Office Action is respectfully requested.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1-5, 8, 9, 11-14 and 16-18 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Bishop, U.S. Patent No. 6,148,624, in view of Pastryk, U.S. Patent No. 6,286,324. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

A complete discussion of the Examiner's rejection is set forth in the Office Action, and is not being repeated here.

In light of the foregoing amendments, Applicants respectfully submit that this rejection has been obviated and/or rendered moot. While not conceding to the Examiner's rejection, but merely to expedite prosecution, as the Examiner will note, independent claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the subject matter of dependent claim 4, including "the container being slidably mountable on and withdrawable from the door along a direction perpendicular to the door". Applicants respectfully submit that the above combination of elements as set forth in amended independent claim 1 is not disclosed or suggested by the references relied on by the Examiner.

Although the Examiner alleged that dependent claim 4 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Bishop in view of Pastryk, the Examiner in the instant Office Action did not indicate which part of Bishop and/or Pastryk teaches "the container being slidably mountable on and withdrawable from the door along a direction perpendicular to the door" as recited in dependent claim 4, which now has been incorporated in amend independent claim 1.

In fact, neither of Bishop and Pastryk disclose the above combination of elements as set forth in amended independent claim 1. Although Bishop discloses an ice bucket 24 in FIGs. 1-3 and 5-7 and an ice storage bin 68 in FIGs. 8 and 9, Bishop nowhere teaches that the ice bucket 24 or the ice storage bin 68 is slidably mountable on and withdrawable from the door along a direction perpendicular to the door as recited in amended independent claim 1.

In particular, Bishop's ice bucket 24 is pivotably movable (see FIG. 6), but not slidably mountable on and withdrawable from the door along a direction perpendicular to the door. With regard to Bishop's ice storage bin 68, Bishop merely discloses that the ice storage bin 68 is mounted to the door 18 (see col. 3, lines 55-58) without mentioning how the ice storage bin 68 is mounted and withdrawn. Therefore, Bishop fails to teach the above combination of elements as set forth in amended independent claim 1.

Pastryk also fails to cure the deficiencies of Bishop. Although Pastryk discloses an ice storage bin 28 (see FIGs. 3 and 6), this ice storage bin 28 can only be mounted to or withdrawn from the door in the direction parallel to the door, not in the direction perpendicular to the door. As shown in FIG. 6 of Pastryk, the ice storage bin 28 has a plurality pins at its bottom side to be inserted onto the door in the direction parallel to the door so that the ice storage bin 28 can sit on the door. Therefore, Pastryk also fails to teach "the container being slidably mountable on and withdrawable from the door along a direction perpendicular to the door" as recited in amended independent claim 1.

In addition, as shown in FIG. 3 of Pastryk, the device 172 in the ice storage bin 28 rotates along an axis in the direction parallel to the door. Therefore, one skilled in the art would not have the motivation to modify Pastryk's ice storage bin 28 to make it slidably mountable on and withdrawable from the door along a direction perpendicular to the door, because the device 172 has to be connected to the rotatable shaft therebelow in the direction parallel to the door and therefore would not be able to move along the direction perpendicular to the door.

Accordingly, neither Bishop nor Pastryk individually or in combination teach or suggest the limitations of amended independent claim 1. Therefore, Applicants respectfully submit that amended independent claim 1 clearly defines over the teachings of Bishop and Pastryk.

In addition, claims 2, 3, 8, 9, 11-14 and 16-18 depend, either directly or indirectly, from independent claim 1, and are therefore allowable based on their respective dependence from independent claim 1, which is believed to be allowable.

In view of the above remarks, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 1-3, 8, 9, 11-14 and 16-18 clearly define the present invention over the references relied on by the Examiner. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103 are respectfully requested.

Additional Claims

Additional claims 19-21 have been added for the Examiner's consideration.

As mentioned, independent claims 19-21 have been added to include the subject matter of dependent claims 6, 7 and 10, respectively, their base claim 1, and their respective intervening claims, which were indicated by the Examiner as including allowable subject matter. Accordingly, it is believed that claims 19-21 are in condition for allowance.

Favorable consideration and allowance of additional claims 19-21 are respectfully requested.

Additional Cited References

Since the remaining patents cited by the Examiner have not been utilized to reject the claims, but rather to merely show the state of the art, no further comments are necessary with respect thereto.

CONCLUSION

All the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed and/or rendered moot. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all presently pending rejections and that they be withdrawn.

It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the Office Action, and that as such, the Examiner is respectfully requested to send the application to Issue.

In the event there are any matters remaining in this application, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at (703) 205-8000 in the Washington, D.C. area.

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Amendment dated October 5, 2005
Reply to Office Action of July 5, 2005

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Art Unit 3744
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If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

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Respectfully submitted,

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